

# **Ebola Virus Hemorrhagic Fever**

## **The disease Ebola virus hemorrhagic fever is caused by a virus**

Ebola is a virus, named after a river in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire) in Africa, where it was first discovered. It is spread through direct contact with body fluids of a person who is very ill with Ebola virus hemorrhagic fever. Four varieties of Ebola virus are known to exist: Ebola Zaire (EBOZ), Ebola Sudan (EBOS), Ebola Reston (EBOR), and Ebola Ivory Coast.

## **Ebola virus is transmitted person-to-person by direct contact with infected blood, secretions, organs, or semen**

- An infected person can transmit the disease to others as long as virus particles are left in the blood, which may occur weeks after the person is feeling better. There is potential for an infected person to transmit Ebola to others after fully recovering from the illness.
- If an Ebola virus-infected patient dies, the body remains infectious and must be handled with extreme caution.
- Close contact with persons who are infected but who do not yet show signs of active disease is very unlikely to result in infection.
- There is no evidence of airborne transmission of Ebola virus from human to human.

## **Fever and muscle aches are symptoms associated with Ebola infection**

Ebola virus hemorrhagic fever usually begins with the sudden onset of fever, fatigue, muscle aches, and headache, followed by sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, and a rash. The disease can progress until the patient becomes very ill due to severe bleeding which causes kidney problems, liver problems, and shock. Many people (50-90%) who develop Ebola virus hemorrhagic fever will die.

## **The incubation period is variable**

Symptoms of Ebola virus hemorrhagic fever can begin anywhere from 2 to 21 days (usually 7 to 14 days) after exposure to the virus.

## **There is, at present, no cure or vaccine for this viral infection**

**Avoid Ebola infection by avoiding contact with body fluids (blood, feces, urine, vomitus, etc.) of infected people. Men infected with Ebola virus should not have sex for 3 months or until tests show that semen is free of the virus.**